



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Odyssey Theatre's Spreading Roots makes its last stop in Orleans this weekend

Community-based performances conclude cross-capital journey October 1

OTTAWA, ON—Odyssey Theatre, whose *commedia del'arte* rooted productions have been delighting Ottawa audiences for over three decades under the stars in Strathcona Park, went beyond its borders with a project that was inspired – and performed – by community members in diverse neighbourhoods across the Capital Region. Throughout the month of September, the **Spreading Roots** team has joined with community volunteers of all ages from Westboro, Carlington, Caldwell Heights, Stittsville, Greely, Carson's Road and Strathcona Heights. The final presentation will feature a group of young performers from Orleans.

Part of AOE Arts Council's *Neighbourhood Arts 150*, an official Canada 150 and Ontario 150 community-engaged arts project, Odyssey's *Spreading Roots* has joined diverse groups from all corners of Ottawa with professional artists to create performances that celebrate the trees in our neighbourhoods and the contribution they make to healthy and livable communities. The groups have planted trees at the end of performances to add to the city's urban forest, and Ecology Ottawa have made seedlings available at every performance for residents to take home and plant. Odyssey has worked collaboratively with community groups and organizations such as the Volunteer Gardeners of Clare Park, Carlington Arts Initiative, the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre, the Ottawa Public Library – Greely Branch, and others. For the Orleans performance, we were pleased to engage with the Ottawa School of Theatre (formerly OYP Theatre School). Also joining the performance will be the young performers from **Branching Out**, Odyssey's youth mentorship program under the guidance of playwright and director Eleanor Crowder.

The creative team of theatre director and educator Rebecca Benson, storyteller Jacqui Du Toit, composer Venessa Lachance, and choreographer Allison Burns, have worked with Ottawa residents throughout the summer in a variety of creative practices and processes including storytelling, mask, dance, singing and acting. Each performance has been unique, as each neighbourhood has its own stories, thoughts and concerns about the trees that contribute so much to the life and well-being of the community.

The final performance of *Spreading Roots* will take place on:

Sunday, October 1, 2:00pm at

22nd Regiment Park (also known as Cumberland Seniors Park), 315 Centrum Blvd., Orleans

For more information visit www.odysseytheatre.ca.

Follow the project @150ArtsOttawa #150ArtsOttawa www.150ArtsOttawa.ca.

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ABOUT ODYSSEY THEATRE

Odyssey Theatre is a professional mask and movement theatre company and not-for-profit, charitable organization in Ottawa. For over 30 years we have been delighting audiences with imaginative, award-winning productions that tell universal stories in new, exciting, and thought-provoking ways.

